



Holding Your Wedding on the Capitol Complex Grounds

Iowa has one of the most beautiful settings for its state capitol in the country. More and more often, people are looking to this state landmark as a place to hold their wedding ceremony. In order to help you plan this important event, we have compiled some of the most frequently asked questions about holding your wedding here. Like other state parks, the Capitol Complex Grounds can provide a beautiful backdrop for this occasion, but please be aware of the limitations and responsibilities that come with using public space. The Department of Administrative Services is happy to help you secure a location, but we are limited in what additional services we can provide for private events. Please read through this information and call the DAS Events Coordinator at 515-281-7259 for more information or when you're ready to book your wedding.

What locations are available for weddings on the Capitol Complex? The largest space is the West Capitol Terrace (the park west of the Capitol, bordered by Pennsylvania/East 7th Street on the west, Finkbine/East 9th on the east, East Grand Ave. to the north, and East Walnut St. to the south). Many weddings are also held in the Monument Area south of the Capitol (south of East Walnut between East 9th and East 12th). There have also been weddings in the area of the World War II Monument (west of the Grimes Building; east of East 12th and south of East Grand Ave.). Additionally, south of East Court Avenue near the Judicial Building are the Japanese Bell and the Shattering Silence monument, which can work for small weddings. Questions about various locations should be addressed with the DAS Events Coordinator.

What days are the Capitol Grounds available? The Grounds may be scheduled seven days a week – you must check availability with the DAS Events Coordinator before actually scheduling your wedding on the Grounds. The various areas are scheduled for many events during the spring, summer and fall and approved on a first-come basis. The Capitol Grounds close at 11 p.m. each night; your event must be cleaned up and gone by then.

How long does it take to find out if our request has been approved? Your request can be verbally approved right away by the DAS Event Coordinator, and a follow-up confirmation letter will be sent to you. Approval is dependent on availability of space for the date/time requested.

Is there a cost for using the space? At the present time there is no charge for use of the Capitol Grounds for your wedding as long as there are no clean-up costs or damage costs incurred. If the State incurs clean-up costs or damage costs, you will be billed for those charges.

What about a rain location? We strongly encourage you to have a back-up rain location. No rain locations are available on the Capitol Complex, with the exception of the State Historical Building. Arrangements for use must be made directly with that building (515-281-3809 or historicalbuilding.rental@iowa.gov).

Is the State Historical Building available for weddings? Yes, the State Historical Buildings has many weddings, both inside and on the outdoor patio. For more information and to check availability contact the State Historical Building directly at 515-281-3809 or e-mail at historicalbuilding.rental@iowa.gov. There is a charge for using this facility.

Is it possible to close the street that runs west of the Capitol (Finkbine/East 9th)? If you have a very large wedding it may be possible to close Finkbine Street during the wedding. This must be approved in writing by the DAS Event Coordinator. If approved, you must provide your own barricades and/or tall orange cones to block the street at both ends and have a person delegated to be in the area to monitor the closure. Barricades must be removed after the ceremony.

Where should guests park? There is some visitor parking on Finkbine/E 9th Street, in lots south of East Court Avenue, and other areas on the Capitol Complex. For weddings on the West Capitol Terrace, we recommend using the State Parking Structure at the corner of East Grand and Pennsylvania avenues. Parking in that ramp and in all surface lots on Complex is free.



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Can I have alcohol on the Capitol Complex? Is smoking allowed? Alcohol and tobacco are **not** allowed on the Capitol Complex. There are no exceptions, even for a small amount of wine or champagne to toast the couple.

Are there restrooms available? The Capitol Building is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. If your wedding is during these hours, you may go inside the Capitol and use the restrooms. Otherwise, public restrooms are not available in the area. Please note: The Capitol is closed on Sundays and state holidays.

Are we required to provide portable restrooms? This is determined by the day/time of the wedding, how large the wedding is and how long you will be on Complex. The DAS Events Coordinator will make this determination after discussions with you. Portable restrooms may be rented from various rental companies in the area. They must be placed on concrete, not on sidewalks or grassy areas.

Do I need to provide security? For larger events, we suggest you assign someone to monitor the crowd, assist with questions, etc. We do not require private security to be provided. Post 16 of the Iowa State Patrol – which provides Capitol Complex security – may be called for emergencies at 515-281-5608.

Do I need to get special permission to take photos on the Capitol Complex? You may take photos in any visitor location on the Capitol Complex grounds and inside the Capitol without special permission.

Do I have exclusive use of the area for my wedding? Can I close off a portion of the West Capitol Terrace, monuments garden, etc.? The Capitol grounds are a public space with visitors every day; you do not have exclusive use of the space. You cannot block or rope off space for your event, and be aware that other visitors to the Capitol Complex could stop to watch your wedding ceremony.

Can I attach flowers to the railings on the West Capitol Terrace? We do not allow anything to be attached to the railings, flower beds, trees, etc. Please bring in your flowers or other decorations in vases or containers and remove from the Complex as your event is cleaned up.

Can I have a band/music on the West Capitol Terrace? You are allowed to have music on the West Capitol Terrace. Electrical outlets are on the lampposts in the area.

May I have a canopy tent or arch? Yes, but it must be secured with sandbags; absolutely no stakes in the ground are allowed.

Where do I rent chairs and when can they be delivered? You may rent chairs from various rental companies in the area. They need to be delivered the day of your event and picked up when your event is concluded. They cannot be left on the Complex overnight.

Can guests throw bird seed/rice, blow bubbles, etc.? Is sidewalk chalk allowed? No rice, bird seed, bubbles or silly string are allowed to be thrown in the area. Additionally, sidewalk chalk is not allowed.

Whose responsibility is it to clean-up after the wedding? Clean-up of the area is your responsibility. Please bring your own bags to remove all trash from your wedding from the Capitol Complex. Replace bags in the trash containers in the area if you use them (size 45" x 48" bags).

Who is responsible for any damage to the area? Iowa law expressly provides that groups using the area are liable for any damage.

Who do I contact to schedule a wedding? Contact the DAS Events Coordinator, Nancy Williams. Hours: Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Phone: 515-281-7259; e-mail: nancy.williams@iowa.gov.